

abuses its Jewish or its Muslim or its Baha's believers is also a government that is likely to persecute members or portions of its Christian community as well. The death, imprisonment, and persecution of Christians for their religious beliefs affects some 150 million people around the world. The violation of the rights of Christian believers include discrimination in employment, political harassment, restrictions on the exercise of political rights, the imposition of harsh prison sentences, torture and inhumane conditions in prison, and in some cases the enslavement of women and children.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to the attention of my colleagues some of the countries which are serious violators and which were identified in the State Department report. China is one of the principal violators of freedom of religion, despite its own constitutional promises of freedom of belief. The report notes: "The government of China has sought to restrict all actual religious practice to government-authorized religious organizations and registered places of worship." In a classic catch-22 situation, Roman Catholic church organizations which recognize the authority of the Pope will not be registered because they recognize and owe spiritual allegiance to an authority out of China. Any Vatican-affiliated Catholics are considered unregistered.

The Government in Beijing has cracked down on unregistered Roman Catholic and Protestant groups, and it has raided and closed down groups that simply gather to worship in each other's homes. Religious leaders of these groups have been detained and been subjected to lengthy interrogation and in some cases beating and physical abuse.

A number of other countries were identified in the report because of official policies limiting or prohibiting freedom of religious expression. In Sudan religious persecution of Christians has reached incredible levels, including torture, outrageously long prison sentences, and enslavement of women and children. Similar problems exist in a number of Islamic countries. Saudi Arabia prohibits public and private religious observances by members of all non-Muslim religions. Countries which recognize Islamic Shari's Court rulings also have a serious record of violations of religious freedom. A Lebanese Christian, Elie Dib Ghalib, was arrested in the United Arab Emirates some 18 months ago in connection with his marriage to a Muslim woman. A Shari's Court ruled that the marriage was null and void, their relationship was determined to be immoral, and he was sentenced to 39 lashes and a year of imprisonment.

Mr. Speaker, even some of our closest allies have legislation and government practices which are surprisingly restrictive of religious freedom. Greece, a country widely acclaimed as "the birthplace of democracy," has a religious registration law that is surprisingly restrictive for all non-Orthodox religious communities. Similar serious problems exist in Russia and other republics of the former Soviet Union, where post-Communist governments are dealing with demands of existing religious organizations to limit other, primarily Christian groups, from establishing a presence in these newly independent countries.

In this context, Mr. Speaker, I was most encouraged by the decision, announced the day of our briefing with Secretary Shattuck, by Russian President, Boris Yeltsin to veto the highly restrictive law on religions that was

passed by the Russian Duma and Federation Council a few weeks ago. His action took great political courage, and I welcome his action.

I do want to call the attention of my colleagues to some countries where governments have taken action to assure religious freedom, despite strong pressures against such policies. In striking contrast with the restrictive practices of the Government of the People's Republic of China, the Government of the Republic of China on Taiwan has shown tolerance for religious diversity and respect for religious liberty. India, a country with strong indigenous religious traditions, has also shown considerable understanding of the importance of assuring freedom of religion.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to give careful consideration to this important document on U.S. Policies in Support of Religious Freedom. The Department of State has compiled an excellent report on the current status of religious liberty around the world. We must continue to work together with the administration and intensify our efforts to assure that governments around the world respect the religious rights of their citizens. As Secretary Albright noted in quoting Thomas Jefferson: "It behooves all who value liberty of conscience for themselves to resist invasions of it in the case of others; or that case may, by change of circumstances, become their own."

#### MCDADE AND FAZIO INVESTORS IN AMERICA

#### HON. STEPHEN HORN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 25, 1997

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, with these late night sessions, I have had the opportunity to read the report of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development. Chairman JOE MCDADE and Ranking Democrat VIC FAZIO, and their subcommittee colleagues, have crafted a document which invests in America.

Our Nation has a variety of problems concerning energy and water development throughout the land. Whether flood control, environmental problems, nuclear waste disposal, or electric power—among other key priorities—they have been judicious in their decision making.

I am particularly grateful that the Subcommittee, and now the House, have recognized the flood dangers along the Los Angeles, Rio Hondo, and San Gabriel rivers in southeastern Los Angeles County. Five hundred thousand residents live and work in 177,000 structures which are at risk of flooding. The committee's decision to increase the funding needed to implement the largest urban flood control project in the United States is deeply appreciated.

FAMILY FEST: A COMMUNITY  
EVENT TO HELP IMPROVE EDUCATION

#### HON. ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 25, 1997

Mr. BLAGOJEVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding community event that has occurred in my district for the past 10 years. Madonna High School's Family Fest is a 5-day outdoor festival that brings families together while improving educational opportunities for young women in the city of Chicago. Offering a wide array of family-oriented activities, the festival raises an average of \$12,000 a year in scholarships and financial aid for young women hoping to attend the Madonna High School. To date, proceeds have been able to provide 37 percent of the study body at Madonna High School with financial aid.

As Abraham Lincoln said in 1832, "Upon the subject of education . . . I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people may be engaged in." These sentiments on education expressed by President Lincoln 165 years ago still hold true today. Caring teachers, motivated students, and an involved community are the essential components to improving education in our country. Family Fest should serve as a model to the rest of the Nation on how community values and hard work can help improve our system of education, and ensure a brighter future for America.

Family Fest is proof positive that a community can come together to achieve a common goal. I can think of few goals more worthy of our support than improving educational opportunities for our young people. I commend the parents, staff, and students of Madonna High School for their hard work and dedication to this cause, and wish them continued success with this outstanding program.

HONORING PROF. JOHN BRITTAIN

#### HON. BARBARA B. KENNELLY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 25, 1997

Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of Connecticut's most outstanding citizens, a brilliant lawyer and a warrior for justice, John Brittain. Professor Brittain has been a member of the faculty of the University of Connecticut law schools since 1977. For those two decades, he has been a constant presence in my State, a voice of conscience that is heard whenever the rights of individuals are at stake.

John Brittain knows that the Nation's promise of equality under the law must never be allowed to become mere words. That promise is the central tenet of American life, and it must be kept for the sake of all our future generations. So John Brittain has made it his cause to see that the promise is kept—even when it is difficult and even when it is uncomfortable.

In 1989, Professor Brittain, among others, filed *Sheff versus O'Neill*, the landmark case challenging the racial, economic, and educational segregation between Hartford and the